

Sudan's Statement

By State Minister of Defence

3rd Review Conference, 27 June 2014

Your Excellency Mr. President, head of delegations, friends, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen:

Since our last meeting in Cartagena, Sudan has made all possible efforts to meet its obligations under Ottawa treaty. In last five years Sudan Mine Action programme has made remarkable achievements by releasing 20 millions square meters of previously contaminated land, Providing Mine Risk Education to over 1.4 million people in risk and has assisted over 600 mine victims and their families. Sudan has release 90 millions square meters since year 2002. Thanks to generous contribution from Japan, Italy, Qatar, China, USAID, UK, donors to CHF, EU, Spain, Netherlands, Norway, Canada, Sweden and Australia for their contribution to Mine Action over last 10 years. I would also like to thank ICRC and all UN agencies mainly UNMAS, UNICEF, UNDP and UNOPS for their tireless efforts in assisting Sudan deal with its mines and ERW problem.

Under Ottawa treaty, Sudan committed to meet its obligation by April 2014, but due to eruption of conflict in South Kordufan and Blue Nile states, we were not able to meet the given deadline and thus requested for an extension to the original deadline. I would like thank again all members states parties for granting five years of extension for Sudan to meet its obligations under Ottawa treaty Article 5. Under the extended deadline of Ottawa Treaty Article 5, Sudan is committed to meet its obligations by April 2019. We will leave no stone un turned meeting our target. We call upon our co member states to support Sudan in reaching the vision "Sudan free from threat of landmines and Explosive remnants of war". Sudan has revised its strategic plan for Mine Action and has developed a multi years work plan for completion of Mine Action operation in the country which will be keep updated on regular basis. Sudan remains committed to be active member of Mine Ban convention and support other countries where possible.

Sudan has extensively benefited from land mines and ERW clearance operation, it has pave the way for socio economical development in the county. As an example I would like to say that In February 2014 Hamdaite a location right at the border with Eritrea and Ethiopia was declared free from landmines and ERW, soon after the development activities started that includes building of a primary school for girls, a bridge on the river to connect Hamdiate with Ethiopia and Eritrea, an irrigation canal, establishing initial screening center for refugees by UNHCR.

Sudan is one of the countries who accepted and adopted the land release policy in very early stages of Mine Action in the world, thus gained extensive experience and is now even ready to share its experience with other countries. Sudan also was pioneer in integrating Mine Risk Education into the education Syllabus. The national council of people with disabilities was initiated by the National Mine Action Center and work plan for supporting people with disabilities was adopted by relevant ministries.

In South Khartoum, we have established a training center for demining, EOD and MDDs which provides training opportunity to our implementing partner and we welcome other countries to take advantage of this facility, we have qualified trainers. The staff of Sudan National Mine Action center are well trained and highly qualified in managing day to day Mine Action operation.

I would like to remind us that despite this notable achievements, Sudan is still one of the most heavily mine affected countries in the world with a 35 million square meter of land yet to be cleared. Over 1,900 people have either been killed or maimed by Mines and ERW so far. Unfortunately these accidents still continue to happen, the recent mine accident happened on 3rd of March 2014 in Rassai, Hamoshkoraib locality of Kassala, killing 1 person. And just two days earlier than that, 5 innocent children were seriously injured as a result of explosion of a grenade in Kadugli town in South Kordufan.

Over next five years, we would like to speed up our efforts to eliminate the threat posed by Landmines and ERW in Sudan, we will increase contribution from government national budget. We call upon all neighbouring countries to share their Mine Action related experience by visiting Sudan and vice versa. Once again I would like to call upon co member states to extend their support to Sudan in fighting against the hidden enemy (the mines and ERW).

Sudan reaffirms its commitment to all relevant convention to give an ending to human suffering.

Thank you.